

USSH. 09/828,175
Examiner: FULLER, ERIC B
Group A.U.: 1762
September 24, 2002

In the Claims

The Examiner is kindly requested to replace original claims 1-6 and 9-10 with amended claims 1-6 and 9-10 as recited herebelow in clean form, in compliance with 37 U.S.C. §1.121(c)(1)(i).

- 1. (Amended) A method for manufacturing a security element for documents, forgery-proof labels, checks and seals, comprising the steps of:
providing a polyester backing layer;
applying a covering layer to at least one face of said backing layer,
removing preset regions of said covering layer with a laser beam having a wavelength between 900 and 1200 nm, said preset regions defining a code which can be customized in any manner and detected in any manner, said laser beam acting on said covering layer through one of said backing layers, wherein said covering layer comprises a magnetic layer.
2. (Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said covering layer further comprises ink.
3. (Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said covering layer further comprises a metallic layer.
4. (Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said covering layer further comprises an aluminum layer.
5. (Deleted)
6. (Amended) The method according to claim 1, comprising a second backing layer which is applied to the other face of said covering layer.
9. (Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said laser beam has a solid-state Nd:Yag source.
10. (Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said laser beam has a wavelength which is comprised between 1030 and 1100 nm.--

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Attached hereto is also a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment, as provided for by 37 U.S.C. §1.121(c)(1)(ii). The attached page is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made to the claims".

Remarks

The Examiner's comments and grounds of rejection raised in the Office Action dated June 24, 2002 have been carefully considered by the Applicant. To further the prosecution of the present application, claims 1-6 and 9-10 have been amended.

Prior to this amendment, Claims 1-12 were pending in the application. In order to overcome the Examiner's objections, a slightly amended set of claims is hereby submitted in triplicate, better distinguishing Applicant's invention from the applied prior art documents, without however departing from the spirit of the claims currently on the file.

It is observed that the Examiner rejected original claims 1-12 as being allegedly anticipated by Harbaugh (US 5,535,871), by Hutton (US 5,959,768), by Zientek (US 6,372,394 B1), by Mantegazza (EP 0 310 707 A2) by Leender (US 5,478,695) and by Meyer et al. (US 5,858,474).

Applicant's invention according to amended claim 1 now explicitly recites the covering layer comprising a magnetic layer, as originally claimed in claim 5.

None of the cited prior art documents discloses a method for manufacturing a security element for documents comprising the step of acting with a laser beam on a magnetic layer.

More in detail, according to the Office Action, page 5, third paragraph, original claim 5 is deemed to be unpatentable over the teachings of Harbaugh in view of Hutton, Mantegazza and Meyer. However, Applicant kindly points out that: